

Samuel A. Mather
FAREWELL EXHORTATION

1657
TO THE CHURCH AND PEOPLE
OF DORCHESTER IN
NEW-ENGLAND.

But
Not unprofitable to those that shall read it.

Containing Christian and Serious Incitements, and
persuasions to the Study and Practise of Seven principal
Duties of great Importance for the Glory of God, and the
Salvation of the Soul. And therefore needfull to be seriously
considered of all in these declining times.

By **RICHARD MATHER** Teacher to the
Church above mentioned.

2 Pet. 1. 15. Moreover I will Endeavour that you may be
able after my decease to have these things alwayes in remembrance.
Phil. 2. 12. Wherefore my Beloved, as you have alwayes
Obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my
absence, Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling.

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New-England 1657.

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THE
PREFACE TO THE READER.

Christian Reader,

I*t is warranted, and grounded upon the light both of nature and Scripture. 2 Cor. 12. 14. That Parents should lay up for their Children, and leave such an estate behind them, that their posterity after them may comfortably bee provided for, which as it is requisite for the outward subsistence of Children in temporal regards: So it is most necessary for spiritual Fathers (which the word of God tells are not many, 1 Cor. 4. 13. how many instructors soever there are) I mean for the faithful Ministers of Christ, to leave a good stock & heritage of Gods Testimonies for his people committed to their charge, and their children in the faith: which care as it was alwayes needfull so especially it is in these times, wherein there is so much Apostacy & departing away from the faith & truth. In this regard we find it to have been the practise of the most precious servants of the Lord, that in their old age they have left their cypreas cantiones, their swans songs (as they are called) which they sung not long before they departed this life, as Moses did Deut. 32. the occasion of which song is set down Deut. 31. 27, 29. I know your rebellion and your stiff neck: behold while I am yet alive with you, ye have been rebellious against the Lord, & how much more after my death? and ver. 29. I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt your selves, and turn aside from the way that I Commanded you, and evill will befall you in the latter dayes, because ye will do evill in the sight of the Lord &c: Therefore ver. 26. Moses commanded the Levites to take the book, and to put it in the side of the Arke of the Covenant, for a witness against them upon any apostacy of theirs. And as there was not as great need that such like course should be taken by Gods faithful servants and Ministers to leave some workes as it were in the Arke of the Covenant, some monuments & witnesses against the backsliders in these dayes? Much like to this is the example of Joshua before his death, as appeares Josh. Chap: 23, and 24. wherein he warnes them against their apostacy most sweetly & pathetically, and particularly remarkable is that Josh. 24. 25, 26. Joshua made a Covenant with the people, and set them a statute, and Ordinance in Sechem, and Joshua wrote those words in the book of the Law of God, and took a great stone, and set it there under an Oak that was by the Sanctuary of the Lord, and said unto all the people, behold this stone shall be a witness unto us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord, which he spake unto us, lest ye deny your God.*

Thus it hath pleased the Lord in mercy, & guide the spirit of this Reverend Minister & servant of Christ, now being stricken in yeares, and solicitous about the state of the Lords flock committed to his charge, what may befall them after his departure in such times as these, to leave this precious treatise, as a jewell, little in bulk, but great in vertue & value, as a witness that may survive after his departure, and it may serve both as a warning & a testimony not only to the Congregation of Doncaster, but to all the Congregations & Churches of Christ here or else where, that shall have the perusal of it, and it may be as Joshuab's stone, and a standing witness against such amongst us as shall deny the Lord & his truth now both preached & professed by Gods grace amongst us.

Many of the Lords living witnesses are either killed or deceased and taken up to heaven, and those few that are surviving have very nigh finished their Testimony, and are following the others apace: Therefore it is very precious & desirable as many of them as may be, when they can no longer resistive viva voce, with a lively voyce, they may deu mortua, or with a dead voyce, (or by writing) which is many times effectual and of great use: as it was the speech of that wise King Alphonsus, mortui esse consulendos, ab ijs querendam veritatem, optimosq; eos esse consiliarios, that is that we should ask counsel of the dead, (meaning the books of wise and good men departed) and that the truth is to be sought of them, and that they are the best counsellours: and before him Demetrius Phalereus in Plutarch wisely admonishes Ptolomeus Philadelphus, the great Patron of learning, and the learned men of that age, ut demortuorum sapientium libros sibi compararet, quod quae aliquando consiliarii neque libere admo-vere metu penae vellent, aut etiam sine periculo aliquo non auderent, de illis in libris eorum abunde et libere scriptum esset. That is, that he should get the books of learned men departed, that of those things which sometimes his counsellours neither freely would admonish him for fear of punishment, or perhaps without some danger durst not, I say of those things it was plentifully & freely written in their books.

So we can not tell how near such times may be, wherein neither friends nor ministers either will or dare make known unto us the blessed will of God: in such times doubtless godly books will speak freely to us, yea in whatsoever times that saying is most true, nullus amicus est magis liber quam liber, no freind is more free then a book is.

Finally I commend unto thy piety & practise Christian Reader, this pious treatise of this Reverend & judicious servant of the Lord, to which (at the request of a friend, in sincere respect of the Author, & just estimation of the work) I have prefixed a short preface, as the paper would permit; now I shall conclude undoubtedly with that speech of our Saviour Job. 12. if ye know these things happy are ye, if ye do them, so I commend both thy knowledge & practise hereto to the grace of God in Christ.

At this friend I hope, of thine everlasting peace,

Charles Chauncy.

TO THE CHURCH AND INHABITANTS
of DORCHESTER in New-England, Mercy and Peace
in CHRIST JESUS.



My dearly beloved Brethren, In much desire and importunity
Blessed Apostles Peter & Paul, 13. and the angels of the Lord, that is, the
be always present with you, and the Lord himself, who is the
the Everlasting good, and the Lord himself, who is the
have the same in your hearts, and the Lord himself, who is the
and should be my Lord, and the Lord himself, who is the
Tenny, & slender, and the Lord himself, who is the
at now by the space of two or three years and upwards, I have been putting you
in remembrance of sundry things, and duties of the Gospel, by word of mouth, so
no small part of my intention in present undertaking is, that you might remem-
ber the Lord and your own duty, not only whilst I shall live, but also after my de-
cease. And as it was said of the blessed Apostle, to be the more diligent
during life, as knowing that he must shortly dy, and lay down this Tabernacle, 1 Pet.
1. 14. And an other Apostle, to be more diligent & earnest, because the time of his de-
parture was at hand, 2 Tim. 4. 5, 6. and our blessed Saviour afore them, would not
saye to work till midnight, when at four hee, whilst it was day, because a night was
comming when no man could work, John 9. 4. It is like sort I was the more desirous
to performe this service (such as it is) for the good of your soules, in knowing that
it will not be long (considering my yeeres) afore the time comes when I can be service-
able here no more. But though you can not alwayes have my undertakings by word
of mouth, yet what is here presented to your view, may be alwayes with you, when-
ever you shall please to call for it: And as it is said of Abel, that being dead, he
yet speaketh, Heb: 11. 4. So why may not I be speaking to you in these poor papers
for the good of your soules, when in person I shall be removed from you by death's death.
So you have my Apologie for my present undertaking, and a manifestation of my
Scope and aime therein.

Be pleased therefore I beseech you, to give me leave to commend to your

consideration & acceptance in the Lord, a few lines of Christian counsel & advice, for the good of your precious and immortal soues, which I desire to leave with you as the best Legacy I can be quiet to you, that you may read and profit by the same when I am taken from you. And I beseech you receive it as from one that doth unfeignedly love you, or as the least dutie which he had a being that could do it, and thinks he could be right heartily glad if the welfare & salvation of all your soules; and that when you and I must all appear before the Lords Tribunal, we might then joye and have comfort together in Christ Jesus for evermore, as finding that our labours, whether mine in preaching, or yours in hearing, whether mine in writing, or yours in reading, hath not been in vain. With these desires I desire to tender to you these few lines, and directions, in which I desire that so and no otherwise you may find the way to the forme, which is the forme & directions are expressed in these Sayings particulars that follow.

FIRST of all, I beseech you, be not weary of the great work of Sorrow for your Sinne, of Contrition and Mourning of Soul in fight and sweat thereof. For you must needs confess that there is any amongst you but hath cause enough to be sensible of sin, and deeply affected therewith. For the Scripture is most true that tells you that we have sinned, *Rom. 3. 23.* and *3. 12.* and that there is not a just man upon the earth that doth good & sinneth not, *Eccles. 7. 20.* and that if you say you have no sin, you deceive your selves, & the truth is not in you, *1 John 1. 8.* Now if there be sin in you, shall there not be grief & sorrow because of the same? Is not this the most proper cause of sorrow? When you can truly say you have no sin, then you will have no cause of sorrow; but this you can never say, whilest you are here upon earth. And sure it is, sin is a dishonour & grief unto God himself, and to his holy Spirit, *Gen. 6. 5, 6. Psal. 95. 10. Ephes. 4. 30.* and if it be so to him, shall it be no grief to you? Shall your sinne be a burthen to the Lord, *Isay 1. 13, 14, 24* and he be pressed under them, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves, *Amos 2. 13.* and shall you be unsensible of any burden therein, and securely go on, as if there were no cause of grief or mourning for this thing? Never say you love the blessed God, if it be so with you; If your sin which is such a dishonour and injury and grief to him, be not a grief to you also. If you be of those that must be saved by Christ, then it was for your sin, as well as for the sins of others that Christ was Crucified, and put to endure all those dolefull & bitter sufferings in the garden, and upon the Crose, *Mat 26, & 27.* For all his sufferings were for the sinne of those that must be saved, *1 John 3. 5, 6, 8.* And can you believe & remember & consider these his sufferings, and look upon him

as one whom you have pierced, & yet for all this remain without true Contrition & grief of heart? believe it in your hearts are very hard indeed. What? kill Christ, and not be grieved? and look on him whom you have pierced, and yet not mourn, nor be in bitterness for all this? Is this possible? or may it not rather be concluded from *Zech. 12. 10.* that those that do not bitterly mourn for their sins, as the cause of Christs sufferings, that such hard hearted creatures are none of those that must be saved by Christ, nor have part and portion in the saving benefits of his passion? He that was a man after Gods own heart, you may find him complaining that his iniquities were gone over his head, and were as an heavy burden, too heavy for him, *Psal. 38. 4.* and that therefore he would declare his iniquity & be sorry for his sin, *Psalm 38. 18.* and though a man of much grace & holiness, yet because of that was still dwelling in him. cries out, oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? *Rom. 7. 24.* And both he & David, & other Saints have lamented over their sins & iniquities, the sins & iniquities of other men, *Psal. 119. 136.* *Jer. 18. 18, 19.* *2 Cor. 2. 4.* & *12. 21.* *Ezek. 9. 4.* *2 Ps. 2. 7, 8.* And if so, then judge in your selves, what hearts those men have, who are so unlike these men of God, that they have no heart to grieve & mourn for their own sins, and much less for the iniquities of others. And if Heaven be a place of wiping away mens tears from their eyes, *Rev. 7. 17.* & *21. 4.* are they ever like to come there who have tears in now for other causes, but none for their sins? But what should I speak of coming to heaven? the way is, without Compunction of heart & sorrow of soul for a mans sins, he is never like to attain to any truth of saving grace upon earth. For can a child be born, where there never was any travelling paines? can there be a crop of corn at harvest, where the ground was never plowed, nor broken up? Is not the way to Canaan through the wilderness? doubtless through the wilderness you must go, if ever you will come to Canaan. And what was that wilderness? a terrible place surely, yea a place wherein were fiery flying Serpents, and Scorpions, and drought, *Lev. 8. 15.* a land of deserts, and of pits, and of the shadow of death, *Jer. 2. 6.* and yet through this wilderness must Israel go, before they could enter into the good land. In like sort, a soul must go through a wilderness-like condition, that is, he must be afflicted with sight and sense of spiritual misery & sin, before he can attain to any state of saving rest & grace in Christ Jesus. For the Scripture tell us that they to whom Christ Jesus is sent, are poor, broken-hearted, captives, prisoners, blind, and bruised creatures, *Luke 4. 18.* *1. Cor. 6. 1.* yea that they mourn in Sion, do sit in ashes, in mourning and in a spirit of heaviness, *Isa. 61. 1.* and

and in a lost estate, and to those is the Lord Jesus sent to seek & save them, and to preach the Gospel to them, *Luke 10. 10. Iſai. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18.* But for others, that do not feel themselves sick of sin, but are secure & hard hearted, as if they were righteous and whole & well, to those the Lord Jesus himself tells us that he is no physician for the healing of them, *Mat. 9. 12, 13.* and if Christ who is the only physician to cure souls, be not sent unto them, do not heal them nor call them, how is it possible that they should ever be healed? how is it possible that they should be converted & called? The result is, the ruine of many professors and hearers, that they are too slight to be moved by their first coming on in the Gospel; as the stony ground did not receive the seed with joy, but because of the depth of earth, and the stony heart not being sensibly broken & melted, therefore they continued not, but in time of temptation fell away, *Mat. 13. 5, 6, 20, 21.* and so that proverb is fulfilled, *Prov. 11. 17.* The house will never stand, that is built upon sand. Therefore without digging deep that it may be founded on the Rock, *Mat. 7. 24, 25.* that is, that profession of Christianity, will not endure, that is not begun in serious and deep humiliation. And though there be men that count all sorrow for sin to be Legall, and not suitable to the spirit of grace in the Gospel, yet it is better for you to believe the word of God, which makes mourning for sin, yea bitter mourning, as for an only Son, or the loss of one's first born, to be the effect & work of the spirit of grace poured forth upon Gods people, *Zech. 12. 10.* & therefore not a meer legall business, as some would make it. They may repent that ever they did so much repent, & look upon their sorrow for sin, as Christ upon his enemies, Lord forgive me for I knew not what I did. But when Christ shall appear to comfort mourners, and to inflict that which long since he denounced, even wo to them that laugh, for they shall weep & weep, *Luke 6. 25.* then these men will be of another mind, and wish they had had experience of more true mourning and sorrow for sin. And therefore my Beloved, if you mean to reap in joy, see that you sow in teares, *Psal. 126. 5, 6.* I mean, if ever you expect to have grace or glory, the salvation of God in this or in another world, see to it that the fallow ground of your hearts be thoroughly plowed up, that you may not sow among thorns, *Ier. 4. 3, 4.* See to it that you be truly sensible of sin, and broken hearted, and as it were sick with sorrow for it, that so Christ & his Righteousness, may be highly esteemed by you, that you may believe in him, and in due time be comforted by him: In a word see to it, that you be not destitute of that godly sorrow that worketh Repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, *2 Cor. 7. 10.* If now you mourn in

in an holy and spiritual manner, the Lord Jesus hath pronounced that you are blessed, and shall be comforted, *Mat: 5. 4.* But otherwise, expect not but that sorrow & mourning will seize upon you, if not now, then at such a time when you shall not be able to put them off, nor find any comfort therein. And as we say of winter, that, winter is seldom or never lost, so may we say of sorrow for sin it will not be alwayes left, but will certainly come, either at one time or another, either now in this life, or hereafter when it will be worse to be born. As Moses said to those Tribes, *Deut: 32. 23.* even so may I say to you, you have sinned, and be sure your sin will find you out. It may be sweet in the present, but assure your selves it will be bitterness in the future end, *Isaiah: 2. 26.* and at the last will bite like a serpent, and sting like aadder, *Pro: 23. 32* yea be bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two edged sword, *Pro: 5. 34.* But oh how much better is the sorrow here, where mercy and forgiveness may be had, than to be hard-hearted & secure, and then to feel sorrow remorseless in Hell.

2. Labour to be men of sound Judgement and Understanding in the things of Religion, and make account that all Errour is sin, as being frequently forbidden by the Lord, *1. Tim: 1. 16.* *Mat: 16. 6, 11, 12.* & *24. 4. 1. Thim: 4. 1.* In so much as that some errors do no less then subvert the soul, *Acts 15. 24.* excluding out of Heaven, as other horrid workes of the flesh, *Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.* and bringing damnation & destruction to them that hold them, *2. Pet: 2. 1. & 3. 16.* and others which are not so fundamental, but are as hay & stubble upon the foundation, yet even these do so hazard a mans salvation, that though he may be saved holding the foundation, yet his work shall be burnt, and he shall suffer loss, *1. Cor: 3. 15.* Wherefore as you love your own soules, take heed of erroneous doctrines & opinions; but contend earnestly for the Faith that was once delivered to the Saints, *Jude 3.* Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God, for many false prophets are gone out into the world, *1. John 4. 1.* Yea your zeal for the Truth, and against the contrary should be such, that if any come to you and bring not the doctrine of truth, you should not receive him into your house, nor bid him God speed, *2. John 10.* But if he were an Angel from heaven, hold him accursed, *Gal. 1. 8.* Therefore believe not them that think a man may be saved in any Religion, & that it were good to have all Religions free, and that opinions have no great danger in them. These are but the deviles of Satan, that so pernicious errors might more easily be entertained, as not being greatly suspected: but believe the word of God which tells you otherwise in the places cited, and in *Acts 15. Acts 20. 29.* where false Teachers are compared to grievous and dangerous wolves.

wolves, And if you can believe that sheep may do well enough though ravening wolves be let in amongst them, then you may believe that false doctrine and they that teach it are no wayes dangerous to the soules of men; But if the one be contrary to experience & common sense, and therefore may not be believed, then neither may the other. Wherefore my beloved, take heed you be not plucked away with any error of the wicked, and fall from your own stedfastness, 2 Pet: 3. 17. But be diligent in the search & study of the holy Scriptures, the want wherof, is the cause of error, Mar: 22. 29. Acquaint your selves with the doctrine of Catechism, and be well grounded therein; for commonly they that fall to error are defective in the knowledge of Catechistical points. Make conscience to obey the Truth which you do already know; for such have a promise to know the truth, John 7. 17. And live not in, nor foster any sinfull lust in your hearts, for this makes us over to false doctrine, and them that teach it, 2 Tim: 3. 6. And beware you lay down the pride of your hearts, & be low & litle in your own eyes; for babes shall have the truths of Christ revealed to them, whereas with proud & self-conceited ones it shall be otherwise, Mat: 11. 25. 1 Cor: 3. 18. If you shall be wise in your own conceit, which God forbid, never think your selves Christians indeed in such a case, for there is more hope of a fool then of such, Prov: 12. I think he said well and wisely, who said that to be a true Christian without humility, was as hard as to be a man without a soul: and sure I am, he said very well, and very wisely, who tells us that God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble 1 Pet: 5. 6. James 4. 6.

3. Content not your selves to live without the joyful Ministry, and other holy appointments & Ordinances of Jesus Christ. But make account there is somewhat in it, and much too, when Pastours & Teachers according to Gods heart shall feed his people with knowledge & understanding are promised as special blessings to the people of God, Psr: 3. 15. Isai: 30. 20. and are given reckoned amongst the principal fruits & benefits of the Ascension of Jesus Christ, Eph: 4. 8, 11, 12. On the other side, our Saviour tells us that when the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch, Mat: 18. 14. & therefore he bewailes & pities the condition of such people who were as sheep that had no shepherd, and bids us make it one of our prayers, that the Lord of the harvest, would thrust forth labourers into his Harvest, Mat: 9. 36, 38. Some may think, (and so much I praise is published in print) that when our Saviour speaks of a ministry, and of baptism, to continue, and to have his presence therewith, till the end of the world, Mat: 28. 19, 20. that by the word englished, *The end of the world*, He means no more but the end of that age that then was, when the Apostles were upon the earth, But

But by the like reason they may call the harvest when the Elect shall be gathered by the Angels into the glory of Heaven, and when the wicked shall be cast as tares into Hell fire, they may with as good reason call this Harvest the end of that age when the Apostles lived, for this also is called the end of the world, *Mat: 13. 30, 39, 40.* and if it were absurd to call this Harvest the end of that age, it is no better to translate & expound the word so in the 28 of *Matthew* for the phrase is the same in both places; to omit the mention of other places also, where the phrase is used, as it is rightly englished for the end of this world, and not for the end of the Apostles age. The Apostle tells us, that the Lords Supper must be observed till the Lord come, *1 Cor: 11. 26.* and that the delivering up of the Kingdom as administrated by external Ordinances shall not be till the end, *1 Cor: 15. 24.* but till that time, this way of administering Christs Kingdom shall continue. God forbid that you should be of their mind who think the use of Ordinances to be too low a dispensation for them that have attained those excellent & high attainments of grace, and of Christ in the Spirit which they speak of, For was there ever time, or will there ever be a time of more excellent spiritual attainments then in the primitive Church at Jerusalem when it is expressly said, that great grace was upon them all, *Acts 4. 32, 33.* and yet at this time of so great grace, they did not live without ordinances or above them, as having attained too high attainments to attend upon God in the use of such low dispensations; no, but they continued in the Apostles Doctrine, and fellowship, and breaking of bread, & prayers, *Acts 2. 42.* If through profaneness, or worldliness, or high flown imaginations of excellent attainments, you shall once think an able ministry, & Christs Ordinances to be of no great necessity, believe not that your hearts are in a right frame in such a case; for how should they, when they are so contrary to the heart of him who was a man after Gods own heart, I mean *David*, who often bewailes it & laments it as a great misery, when he was deprived of Sanctuary-enjoyments, as you may see in *Psa. 42. & 43. & 63. & 84.* so that he was so farr from counting it an excellency to live without these things, or to please himself in such a condition that he bewailes such a thing as one of the greatest miseries. It is not like but ere long I shall be taken from you: and then (if not sooner) see that you do your utmost endeavour to obtain a faithfull and an able Minister, to be set over you in the Lord: and acknowledge him & your other Elders your Overseers & Rulers as the Scripture calls them, *Acts 20. 28. 1 Tim: 5. 17.* And therefore be content to Obey them, and Submit your selves to them in the Lord, *1 The: 5. 12, 13. Heb: 13. 7, 17.* And though it be now a time when many think, that no great abilities are requisite in a minister, or preacher of the worl-

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But:

but that ordinary brethren may suffice for such employment, yet you shall do better to be of his mind, who counts it as fit for such work, to be one of a *congregation*, *1 Cor. 13. 23.* which imports it as such to be not very common, but rare it is. And otherwise what need was there for *Paul* to cry out *oh who is sufficient for such things?* *2 Cor. 2. 16.* Sure there was little reason for such an exclamation, if ability to read English be sufficient. but one would think that speech implies, that such abilities and *skills* are requisite for this work, as are not very easy to be found. *Some* of the Rule requires that such men should be able to *deny* the whole *Council of God*, *All that is*, and to be able not only to deliver some truths, and by *Scripture* to *show*, but also to *convince* *guilty*, *1 Tim. 1. 9.* and if the ordinary sort of people can do this, I am much mistaken. They that would not much care if learning and Schools of Learning amongst Christians were suppressed, are but too like that wretched *Jewish* the *Apostle*, who forbade all the children of Christians to be trained up in such Schooles; and his reason *Εαλλομεθα* was *quia propriis penis ferimur*, we are beaten or stricken with as it were with our own weapons. For he was vexed to see the learning and eloquence of some Christians, as *Basil*, *Gregory* & others; and how they by learning were able to withstand the *Argues*, or *cunning* *subtilties* of the *Gentiles*; and therefor to hinder christian Religion, and in favour to *Gentilism*, he devised this devise, *Theodor. 13. C. 2. Sozom. 15. C. 37. Sozom. 13. C. 10, & C. 14. Carion, Chron. p. 278. Symon Historie, book 1. Cent. 4. p. 60.* And therefore judge in your selves whether it be not sad and lamentable that professed Christians should be so like to this wretched Apostle and enemy of Christ! Amongst the sins of the house of *Tyebon*, which were cause to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth, this is reckoned for one, that he made of the lowest of the people *Priests*, so that whosoever would might be consecrated to such employment, *1 King. 13. 33, 34.* And therefore I cannot you prize the Ministry, & an able ministry as an Ordinance of Jesus Christ; and do not think it can be well with you if either you have none or none of any competent abilities; but remember what the Apostle tells you, *Rom. 10. 13, 14, 15.* that as calling upon God is the way & means of salvation and without faith there can be no calling upon God, so not any *faith* without *hearing*, nor *hearing* without a *Preacher*, nor any preach except *they be sent*. If therefore you desire salvation, you must see that you call upon the name of God that *you may be saved*; and if you desire to call upon God, you must see that you be *believers*; and if you would be believers, you must see the necessity of *hearing sent preachers*, as the way & means to believing. even as believing & calling upon

upon God is the way & meanes to saluation. And when God shall be so gracious unto you as to bestow such a man upon you, see that you dearly love him & reverence him in the Lord, holding such in reputation, *Eph. 2. 20.* and counting them very fast to be beautifull, *Rom. 10. 15.* or otherwise the Lord will require it of you as a disrespect offered & done to him, who hath said, *He that hearth & keepeth my commandments & receiveth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, Luke 10. 16. Iohn 13. 20.*

4. *Think it not enough to serve the Lord your selves alone in your own persons, but be sure to have special care that your Children & families may serve him also, and therefore remember to instruct them and teach them the word and will of God, and to pray for them and with them, for Gods blessing to be upon their soules.* For the former of these, there is expresse Commandement & charge, *Eph. 6. 4. Psal. 78. 5. 6. Prov. 22. 6. Deut. 6. 6, 7.* In which last Scripture, every householder is commanded of God to have the words of God in his heart, and that he teach them diligently to his children, talking of them when he sitteth in his house, and when he walketh by the way, when he lyeth down & when he riseth up. And therefore, if your Children & servants be not instructed & taught in the word of God, you will not be able to give any good answer for it before the Lord, having lived in the neglect of so expresse & plain, so serious and solemn a Commandement. The truth is you have but little love either to God, or to your children, or to your selves, if you make not conscience of this duty. For love to God would both provoke to keep his Commandements, of which the teaching of your children is one, and would stir up the soul that hath it to desire & endeavour that God might be honoured & served as much & by as many persons & people as possibly it could attain unto. And therefore how can you say that you love God, when you do not your best endeavour that others, at least your own children & households may do him service? Would you have God to have no service but by your selves, or whilst your selves are alive? You know your selves must not live alwayes; therefore it would be some Testimony of your love to his Majesty, if you be carefull to train up a posterity for the Lord, and so to teach them in his wayes, that your seed may serve him when your selves shall be dead & gone. As for your children, you know they are born in sin, and so children of wrath by nature, and without Regeneration & holiness must never see the Kingdome of God; and can you love them, and not endeavour to help them out of this woefull & wretched condition? I think he loves his child, or his freind but little, that seeth him ly fast asleep within the flood-markes & reach of the tide, and so every hour in danger to be swept away & drowned in the waters and waves of the Sea, and

for all this, can endure yet to let him alone, and never endeavour to awake him and rouse him up, that he may escape that apparent & imminent danger.
 Now then in your selves, what love there can be in you to your poor children when you take no care, or make no conscience to save their soules from the danger of destruction, and from their sins of heart & life, whereby they are in daily danger to be swept away with that deluge, it is to be overwhelmed with destruction. Please not your selves as if you loved them sufficiently in that you are carefull to provide them meat & cloaths; and take necessaries for the body. For Turks & Indians can do so; and should not you be *better* and do *better* than they? Will you do no more for the soules of your children than Pagans & Infidels would do for the soules of theirs? Very beasts and other brut beasts, yea and the *Sea-monsters*, are not so unnatural, but that they have some care of their young ones, *Lam: 4. 1.* Only this care of theirs reacheth no further but to the flesh or body, as indeed they have no immortal Soules to care or be cared for. But I beseech you, let your care & love to your children reach further, even to do your utmost endeavour to help forward the salvation of their precious and immortal soules; else never say you do truly love them. Nay in such case you cannot say you do truly love your selves. For the neglect of this duty will be your own disadvantage, and will further your own discomfort, both in this & in another world. If children be duly instructed when they are young, there is hope they will walk according thereto when they shall be grown, *Pro: 22. 6.* and will not this be a comfort & joy of heart to any godly Parent? the holy Ghost tells us that *the wise Son maketh a glad Father; Pro: 10. 1. & 23. ver. 24, 25. & ver. 15, 16.* But on the other side, who knoweth not, that *the Father of a fool hath no joy, Pro: 17. 21, 25.* and that *a child left to himself bringeth his Mother to shame, Pro: 29. 15.* Unless therefore you love your own sorrow & shame, you must not leave your childre to themselves, neglecting to instruct them in the word & wayes of God, but as you love your selves & your own comfort, you must be carefull of this duty; for this meanes is conducible to such an end, and the neglect hereof, doth lead to the contrary. Consider seriously of this one thing, *viz.* when poor children shall be plagued & damned in Hell for their sin, and the want of grace, and when the Parents also shall be in the same condition as for their other sins, so for this amongst the rest, that they have neglected this duty to their children, and dyed without Repentance for it, what a miserable & woefull day will that be? what a hearing will it be to poor tormented soules to hear their children cry out against them thus, or to the like purpose, *viz.* *„ All this that we here suffer is through you: You should have taught us the things of God, and did not,* you

you should have restrained us from Sin and corrected us, and you did not: 7.
 were the means of our Originall Corruption and guiltiness, and yet you have
 shewd any competent care that we might be delivered from it, from you we did
 receive it, by your neglect we have continued in it, and now we are damned for
 it: Wee woe us that we had such Carnall and careless parents, and woe us
 so you that had no more Compassion and pity to prevent the everlasting misery
 of your own Children.

All this is no more then may well be imagined & supposed to be the woefull condition of many poor children & their Parents, in another world. And if all this seem a light thing in the eyes of any Parent or householder, I may say, the Lord be mercifull to such a man, for his heart is very hard. Iesus was otherwise minded, for he is resolute that he and his house will serve the Lord, *Iosh. 24.15.* and David giveth grave and godly instructions to his Son Solomon *1 Chron. 28.9.* that he should know & serve the Lord, and so *Psa. 4.3.4.5.* And of Abraham, God himself gives Testimony, that he knew that he would Command his children & his household, to keep the way of the Lord, and to do Judgement & Justice, *Gen. 18.19.* and why are these examples recorded, but for imitation? Yea our Saviour tells us, that those that are the children of Abraham, will do the works of Abraham, *Iohn 8.39.* Therefore as ever you desire to be known unto your selves or others to be the children of Abraham by a true & lively faith, so see that you be careful to tread in his steps and to do his workes, as in other things wherein he is propounded as a pattern, so in this particular of instructing & well ordering of your children & families.

But alas, all your instructing will avail nothing, unless God do give the blessing; and therefore you must alse be diligent and faithfull in the practise of prayer for & with your families. Husbands & Wives must live in peace, that their prayers be not hindered, *1 Pet. 3.7.* Cornelius prayed in his house, *Acts 10.30.* David by prayer is said to bless his house, *1 Chron. 16.43.* Abraham prayeth earnestly for Ishmael, *oh that Ishmael might live in thy sight, Gen. 17.18.* and who can think but he prayd for Isaac also, and for the rest of his children? There is a dreadfull Imprecatio for the wrath of God to be poured out upon the families that call not on Gods Name, *Jer. 10.25.* oh see that you be not of that number, for the wrath of God is terrible and intollerable.

Pray without ceasing. & remember that every creature is sanctified by the word of God & Prayer, *1 Tim. 4.4.5.* So that at your meat & your marriage, of which he there especially speaks, and by like reason, your buying & selling, your plowing and hewing, your sowing & mowing and reaping, your feeding cattle and keeping sheep, your planting orchards & gardens, your baking and brewing, your building houses or outhouses, your fencing in ground or other business

what ever, you can not have any holy or sanctified use thereof, if the word of God in your families, and prayer there be neglected. Therefore teach your Children the word of God, firstly the principles of Catechism, and afterwards higher points, and pray that they, and your endeavours with them & for them may be blessed. Tell them, so many of them as have been Baptized, and tell it them as soon as they shall be able to learn, *What a solemn Covenant there is between the God of heaven & them; whereby the Lord takes them to be his own, Ezek. 16.8. yea to be his Children, Sons & daughters unto him, Ezek. 16. 20, 21. Isai. 43.8. and engaged himself to be a God to them, Gen. 17.7. and this even from their Infancy, or mother's womb, Psal. 22.10. Isai. 46.3.* Tell them also that in their Baptism, this Covenant between the Lord & them was solemnly confirmed & sealed; for it was so with the Circumcised, *Gen. 17.11 Rom. 4.11. and it is no less with the Baptized: Yea and tell them that they were Baptized into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Mat. 28.19. and therefore do now bear the name of God upon them, and so are not their own but his, as being called by his name, Deut. 28.9, 10. Isai. 43.7. & 63. last; And if they be the Lords, and be called by his name, and have him to be their God by Covenant, they may be well assured that all the rich blessings of that Covenant shall be their Inheritance for ever; if it be not through their own default, because the Lord is the Faithfull God that keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him and keep his Commandments, even to a thousand generations, Deut. 7.9. Psal. 105.8.* So that if they do not break Covenant with him, He will never break with them. But on the contrary, you must not fail to tell them, that if they for their parts shall walk contrary to their Covenant, in the ways of sin & unbelief, and shall continue impenitently therein, this will be a great aggravation of their sin in the sight of God, and will bring upon them the sorer and more dreadful judgments, as breach of Covenant hath ever done, *Deut. 29. 25, and 31.16, 17. Judges 2.20. Jer. 11.10, 11. Ezek. 16. 8, 32, 38, 39. and their Baptism, which if they kept their Covenant, might be unto them a pledge and seal of salvation, will now be altogether fruitless & unprofitable, as if it were no Baptism, Rom. 2.25, 28. and the condition of the children of Turks or Injians or other Pagans, which were never Baptized, but are strangers from God and from his Covenant, will be no worse, nor more uncomfortable than theirs; or rather theirs will be far worse, their sins being against more mercy and being violations of the Covenant, which was confirmed & sealed in their Baptism. Tell them seriously of these things, and press upon them the remembrance, consideration, and conscience of their Baptism & Covenant, and the great engagement that lyeth upon them thereby. Take account of them*
how

How they profit by hearing Sermon. Suffer them not to profane the Sabbath or Lords day, by spending it in idleness, or mispending any part of that holy time in play. But remember that in the fourth Commandment, the householder is charged to keep that day holy, and to see that Son & daughter, man and maid may do the like. Yea the Mother & mistress of the house is not exempted from this duty: for Solomon was instructed by his Mother, *Pro. 31. 1. &c.* and Timothy by his Mother and Grandmother, *for he knew the holy Scriptures of a child, 2 Tim. 3. 15.* And how should that be done by his Mother and Grandmother being believers, *2 Tim. 1. 5.* For his Father was a Greek, *Acts 16. 1.* And every Vertuous woman will open her mouth with Wisdom, (*viz* in her house amongst her children and servants, for in the Church shee must be silent, *1 Cor. 14. 34. 35.*) and the Law of Grace is in her tongue, *Pro. 31. 26.*

Mothers, you are more with your children whilst they are little ones, then their Fathers are, therefore be still teaching them as soon as ever they are capable of learning. You are at much paines with the bodies of your children, and suffer not a little while you bear them in your wombs & when you bring them into the world, and will you not be at some paines for the saving of their soules? You are naturally of tender and dear affection to your children, and God mislikes it not that it be so; But will you shew no affection to them in respect of their soules, which is the principal matter? Will it not move you to think that the children of your own bowells should everlastingly perish, and be in inconceivable misery world without end? I beseech you have pity upon them; and do your best to teach them, and pray for them, weep for them, and wrestle with God for them, who knows but the prayers and teares of a faithfull Mother may be the salvation of the childes soule?

5. *Content not your selves with the name of Christians or of Church-members, nor with outward profession or an external form of Religion, but see that you be Religious in sincerity & truth, namely follow, 1. After and following forth the power of godliness, and avoiding whatsoever is contrary therunto, or may hinder therein. For God requirith truth in the inward parts, Psal. 51. 6, and counts nothing true religion or godliness which is but external or outward but that only which is inward in the heart & spirit, and inward man, Rom. 2. 29. The Pharisees were tall & righteous before men, and made a great shew outwardly, but their hearts within being full of Hypocrisy & unquietnes, therefore the Lord abhorred them, & all their seemingly glorious performances, Luke 16. 15. Mat. 23. 27, 28. Think with your selfe, that God knoweth the heart, Mat. 13. 24. & 15. 8. Psal. 44. 21. Rev. 2. 23. So that though you may deceive men and your own selves, yet him you can not deceive. Think with*

your selves that though Hypocrisie may be hid & unknown for a time, yet it shall not alwayes do so, but in time shall be *revealed & brought to light*, *Luke 12. 12.* *1 Cor. 4. 5.* Think with your selves, that all professors are not sound but there are many yea very many that are otherwise: for many are called, so as to be amongst the guests of God at this marriage feast, and yet of them that are thus called, there are few that are the *chosen*, and that have indeed the *wedding garment*, *Matt. 22. 10, 11, 12, 13.* And lastly think this with your selves that of all punishments, the punishment of hypocrites is amongst the greatest so: when the dreadfull wrath of God is expressed against that man, *Matt. 24.* it is said, he shall have *his portion with Hypocrites*, *verse 50.* which intimates, that the portion of Hypocrites shall be most dreadfull & terrible. To be Baptized, to be a member of the visible Church of Christ, to be admitted to the Lords Table & to all other priviledges of the Church. To be outwardly blameless & no wayes scandalously vicious for Adultery, Fornication, Lasciviousness, Drunkenness, Prophaneness, Swearing, Scoffing at godlyness, or such like, To be frequent in prayer, in reading the Scriptures & good books, in hearing Sermons, and repeating them afterward, in Sabbath-services & other duties of Gods worship, All this may be & *the heart not right in the sight of God*; for all this is but the *form of godlyness*, which possibly may be, where the *power of godlyness* is wanting, *1 Tim. 3. 5.* The pith & power of Religion & godlyness is another thing, and consisteth chiefly in that which is inward in the heart & soul; as, In a true sight & sense of a mans own sin & vileness, even of that which is inward in the heart, *1 King. 8. 38. Rom. 7. 14, 21, 23, 24.* with an unfeigned self-loathing, or abhorring of a mans self because of the same, and in all true humility and low thoughtfulness of a mans self: In true self-denial, when the will of a man is so subdued to the will of God, as that he can be content that Gods will should take place afore his own, whether that will of God be manifested in the Scriptures or in Providences, and whether it should be submitted & yeilded unto by doing, or by suffering: In *Faith unfeigned*, and the life of faith, when a man adhereth and cleaveth to God in Christ, and to the precious promises of his grace, even then when sense & carnal reason do speak contrary, and when in the eye of flesh & blood there is little or no appearance of any such thing as the promise holdeth forth: In the practise of Mortification, when a man is continually bearing down his corruption, & striving in the strength of Christ from day to day that his *flesh with the affections & lusts thereof may be Crucified and killed*, maintaining a combat and war against sin, and unfeignedly desiring that no iniquity might have dominion over him, but that the old man

man and all the body of sin might be destroyed: In the spirituality of duty, when a man endeavoureth to do all that he doth, whether of the first or second Table, whether in his general or particular calling, 1. In obedience to God that hath so commanded, 2. With the heart & soul and not alone with the outward man, 3. In sense of a mans own infirmity and not in his own strength, but in the strength of Christ, 4. With an heart desirous to please and glorifie God therein, 5. Never taking contentment in any thing he doth, further then the Spirit of Christ doth that carry him forth in all,

6. Feeling need of the pardoning grace of God in the blood and Intercession of Christ, for the best of his performances, 7. Looking up thereunto for the same and for all his acceptance: In heavenly mindedness, when a mans affections and conversation are so in Heaven that he takes no contentment in the best of all the comforts that are under the Sun, but counts them all vanity & vexation of spirit, having many thoughts and holy actings of spirit towards God and Christ, longing for death, and loving the appearing of the Lord Jesus, and this not out of pangs of impatience as not willing to die or suffer the will of God, but from untained hatred of his own sin & corruption, and from earnest desire to be freed from it, and to obtain the enjoyment of more full communion with God and Jesus Christ then in this life can be attained unto, These and such like are the things wherein true Religion and the power of godlines consists: but in meer bodily exercise & external shewes and performances, in the which consisteth not. Oh then strive earnestly after the one, and content not your selves with the other. In these dayes and in this country, profession is somewhat common, Authority through the goodnes of God countenancing Religion, and ministring Justice against all known ungodlines and unrighteousness of men. You have therefore so much more need to take heed and beware, least your Religion reach no further but to the profession & the external form thereof. this for the causes mentioned being so common, and the eye of man being able to reach no further. It is true the condition of many amongst you (and so in other parts of this Country) is such as necessarily puts you on to have much employment about the things of this life, and to labour with care & paines taking in the workes of husbandry, and other worldly business for the maintenance of your selves & your families, the Lord having laid this burden on man, that in the sweat of his face he must eat his bread, in ill health & experience shewes that it is an easy thing in the midst of worldly business to loose the life and power of Religion, that nothing thereof should be left but only the external form, as it were the carcass or shell, worldliness having eaten out the kernel, and having consumed the very soul & life, of godliness. While the man is

1 Kings 20. 40. was *busie here and there*, he whom he should have kept was missing and *gone*: So while many men are busie here & there about worldly employments, the power and life of Religion, which they should have carefully kept, is utterly lost and quite gone. *The deceitfulness of riches, and cares of this life, do as thornes creak the seed of the word in many professours, that they become unfruitfull, Mark 4. 19. As Demas forsook Paul through love of this present world, 2 Tim: 4. 10. and Ezekiels hearers could not bear the word with profit, because their heart went after their covetousness, Ezek. 33. 31.*

Oh therefore take heed, I do beseech you, lest it be so with any of you, least earthly cares and encumbrances should dull your spirits, and take off their edge in the things of greatest importance, and lest by these things all the vigour of Religion should be wasted and worn out, and nothing be left but a dry & sapless formality; a spiritless & powerless profession. You would be more happy if you could make a virtue of necessity, I mean if you could turn all the acts of your particular callings, all the employments that God hath laid up for you about these earthly things, if you could turn them all into so many acts of Religion and Obedience towards God. Which is not a thing impossible, for the Apostle expressly requires it of Servants, that what ever they did (*viz: in the labours of their callings*) they should *do it as unto Christ, as to the Lord and not unto men; Eph. 6. 5, 6 7. Col. 3. 22, 23.* And if servants may do their works and duties of their places with such a spirit, why may not masters do theirs with the like spirit, and Parents theirs, and Children theirs, and husband & wives theirs, and every man & every woman perform their earthly employments in such fear of God, in such singleness of heart, in such respect to the Commandment, that all these may be so many several acts of Obedience towards God, so many parts & expressions of the power & practise of godliness? If Adam had not sinned, his *dressing & keeping the garden Gen: 2. 15.* would have been so: and doubtless with our blessed Saviour it was so; for he was *subject* to Joseph & Mary as a Child to his parents, *Luke 2. 51.* and it is like he wrought with Joseph at the work of a Carpenter, and therefore he was not only called the Carpenters son, but *the Carpenter Mark 6. 3.* and his Religious & pious spirit would doubtless do all these external and earthly business with respect to God and in obedience to him. And the truth is, it is not only the object about which actions are conversant, but the heart wherewith they are done, and the grounds of doing them, with the ends that are aimed at therein, that makes them acts of Religion truly pleasing to God; So that if these be not right and spiritual, then preaching & praying, bearing & repeating Sermons, & such like will be no better then acts of profaneness & ungodliness, and in the issue be charged upon the doers as so many sins.

But on the contrary, civill employments if they be performed with spiritual minds, upon such spiritual grounds, and to such spiritual ends as they might and ought, then these employments even these will be accounted & approved of, as acts of religion & godlyneſſe, or obedience towards God, and as ſuch will be pleaſing in his ſight. Wherefore, to make an end of this, let it be your care, and the Lord help you that you may do it effectually, that earthly or worldly employments may not deſtroy nor diminifh the life and power of godlyneſſe & religion, but that the life & power of religion may breath and be put forth in all your earthly & civil employments.

On Above all other things be carefull in all your deſires and endeavours to make out after the enjoyment of God himſelf, and of Communion with his bleſſed Majeſty, as your ſummmum bonum, your chief good. For you are utterly undone if your hearts come not up to this, even to deſire and chooſe the bleſſed God himſelf for your portion and for all your happineſſe, but ſhall ſit down as contented or ſatisfied with any thing elſe that falls ſhort of God. *They that are farr from God ſhall periſh, he deſtroyeth all them that go a whoring from him, Pſal. 73.27.* And amongſt all the miſeries of an unregenerate ſtate, this is reckoned as the ſoreſt & worſt, that ſuch men are *without God in the world*, *Ephes. 2.12.* Think with your ſelves how at the laſt day the dreadfull doom of the reprobate will chiefly be this, that they ſhall eternally be ſeparated from the favourable preſence of God, *Mat. 25.41.* *2 Theſ. 1.9.* which doth evidently demonſtrate that to enjoy communion with the bleſſed God, is of all things the moſt deſirable for any of the ſonns of men. Imagine all the good in the whole world to be gathered into one ſtore-houſe, and there to be laid up in one heap, you know he that were farr from that ſtore-houſe and had no part there muſt needs be miſerable; and even ſo is ſuch a ſoul as is without the enjoyment of God. If the Sun ſhould depart out of the world there would be nothing left but dreadfull darkneſſe upon all the Creation, all light being now placed in the Sun: and if the fountain be dreyed up or ſtopped, all the ſtreames muſt needs fail. In like ſort, take away the enjoyment of God from any ſoul, and all that is left muſt needs be nothing worth, but even a lump of vanity & evill. For the beſt of creatures without God are but vanity, yea & vexation of ſpirit. You may believe him that by large experience had found it ſo, and gives us his report & teſtimony of what he had found, *Eccleſ. 1.2.* *and 12.8.* And the time will come when his words will be found of others to be a truth, if now it ſeem not ſo. When ſickneſſe comes when old age comes, when the temptations of the Divil do aſſault you, when the pangs of death are upon you, oh then what will all theſe things avails you in that day? they will ſurely be then as Jobs friends, dry & empty pits

pit, miserable comforters and physicians of no paine Job 6. 25. &c. & 13. 4. & 16. 2. Yea when it will be found that all things else besides God are but vain things, that cannot profit nor deliver for they are vain, 1 Sam: 12. 21. The Prodigal when absent from his fathers face & family, may seek to fill his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, but he will find that it will not be, that those husks will not satisfie, but that for all them he will begin to be in want, and be ready to perish through hunger, and all because he is absent from his fathers house, where there is bread enough and to spare, Luke 15. Fall ye in true my beloved, if a man could enjoy the world at will, the greatest confluence of creature comforts that ever man enjoyed, yet if he have not the fruition of the favour of God, all these things would stand him one day in little or no stead, but in the fulness of all his sufficiency, he shall be in straits, Job 20. 24. and the creatures will yeild him no more content & satisfaction then a bed which is shorter then that a man can stretch himself on it, and a covering which is narrower then that he can wrap himself in it, Isai. 28. 20. Oh then as you love your soules, take heed of resting in any creature, and of looking no further then to them. Do not spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not, Isai. 55. 2. do not bewaime your styles the Cisterns are broken Cisterns of one creature or another, that can hold no water, but make out in the desires and longings of your soules after God himself, who is the fountain of living waters, Jer. 2. 13. Do not wander in the outgoings of your hearts after this or that inferiour good, and neglect the Lord who is the principal, for that would be to be like them that wandred and went from mountain to hill forgetting their resting place, Jer. 30. 6. Remember David who at one time in his prosperity thought he should never be moved, the Lord had made his mountain to stand for ever, but when God did once hide his face he was troubled, Psal. 30. 6. 7. and the great mountain of all his outward prosperity could not prevent that trouble. You will do more wisely if you follow him when he said, my soul followeth hard after God, Psal. 63. 8. or him that said, it is good for me to draw nigh to God, Lord whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee, Psal. 73. 25, last or him that could say, the Lord is my portion saith my soul, therefore with hope in him, Lam. 3. 24. For if you do not go a whoring in your affiance or affection after other things, but draw near to God and choise him alone for your portion, you will never repent of such a choise, but will see cause to rejoyce in it, and with thankfulness to acknowledg, that your lines are fallen to you in pleasant places, &c. that in God you have a goodly heritage, Psal. 16. 5, 6. This is the good part, the best part, that can be chosen, and they that have grace to make their choise of it, it shall never be taken from them, Luke 10. 42. But in God as in the fountain of life, in whose sight they shall see light, and

and who makes them drink of the River of his pleasures, in him, and in his favour they shall be abundantly satisfied, *Psal. 36. 7, 8. 9. & 17. 15.* and their soules shall one day be filled as with marrow and fatnesse, and their mouths shall praise the Lord with joyfull lips, *Psal. 63. 5.* It is no great matter if the comfort of creatures shall fail them, if they shall be compassed about with miseries & distresses on every side, yea if they walk in the valley of the shadow of death, yet having God with them and his favour towards them, they need not to fear for any of these things but may comfort themselves and rejoyce in God in the worst condition that can befall them, and at such times be even filled with joy and with the Holy-Ghost, *Hab. 3. 17, 18. 1 Sam. 30. 6. Psal. 23. 4. Ait. 13. 52.* Loe freinds what it is to have the enjoyment of God. Wherefore if you be wise draw near to God, and make him your portion. You see it will be good, yea best for you so to do; and the Lord help you that you may do it unstainedly and effectually, without delay and without declining. Do you not consider what a great & heinous Idolatry it is, when men choose unto themselves other Gods besides the Lord Jehovah, the only true & living God? It is you know the first Commandement of the ten, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but Me?* and to love the Lord above all, even with all the heart and with all the soul, & with all the mind & with all the strength, this is the first and great Commandment *Mat. 22. 37.* Beware therefore that no love of any creature what ever it be, much less the love of any Sin, beware I say that no love to any of these be predominant in your soules above the love of God: you will be vile Idolaters if it be so with you. Beware that there be no Idolls in your hearts, for this may be as bad Idolatry as that which is more apparent & open. See to it that in judgment and affection you do truly account it your cheifest happiness to enjoy the Lord, and that you make him your cheifest good and your last end. If sin be (as it is) an aversion or turning away of the soul from God to something else besides him & above him, then in the work of grace there is a conversion and turning of the soul towards God again, as to the best and chiefest good of all. If it be not thus with you, you will not be able to clear it up to your own consciences that any saving work of grace is wrought in your soules: for how should you, when yet there is something else, which your soules do prefer before God? The very reason why you hear and pray, why you do any duty of one kind or another, yea why you do desire to live and breath on earth, the very reason of all these things, if your hearts be right is chiefly this, that you may seeke the Lord himself, as the first cause and last end, that you may honour him and do for him, and be happy in the enjoyment of him. They in *Zec. 7.* fasted and mourned many a time in this and in that month, even those seventy yeares; and yet saith God, did ye

at all *fast unto me, even unto me, verse 5.* It seemes their fasting was neither with hearts that desired nor aimed to honour God, nor to enjoy communion with God, and therefore all their fasting is rejected, because God was not sought therein. If you do not seek the Lord in your doings and performances, nor make him the end of your desires & endeavours, but that there be something else that your hearts do more esteem then him, and can rest contented withall, though without him, then I must needs say your state in grace is very questionable, or rather unquestionably unsound. For if any man love the world, (sure if he love the same better then God) the love of the Father is not in him; 1 John 2. 15. It is (and must needs be so accounted, even) a vile dishonour & notorious contempt against the allsufficient and blessed God, when any creature whether a mans self, or ought else is more respected and esteemed then he. Therefore though many say, who will show us any good, yet let your hearts say, Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and this shall be to us more gladness of heart, then in the time when their corn and their wine increased, Psalm. 4. 6, 7. CHRISTIAN, thou that readeest these lines, Lift up thy heart unto God, and pray that he would give thee such an heart that thou mightest in sincerity say, Oh that above all things I might have the enjoyment of God! oh that above all things I might be to the honour of God.

7. But how should men that are sinners have any access to God, or enjoy Communion with him. It is true, of themselves they can not, yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing, because JESUS CHRIST the Eternal Son of God hath taken on him the nature of man, and in that nature hath fulfilled all Righteousness, and been Obedient to the death, even the death of the Cross: and so giving his life a ransom for many hath made Reconciliation for the sins of the people, that now by the merit of his death & Obedience, that distance that sin had made between the soul & God, might be taken away, and sinners have access to God by him, who otherwise could have no Communion with him. You know what is written, that Christ hath suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, 1 Pet. 3. 18. and so by him we have access unto the Father Ephes 2. 18.

This therefore is the seventh and last though not the least part of my advice unto you in the Lord. That with all seriousness and uprightness you choose this Lord Jesus, and him alone as the only and Allsufficient way & means for your enjoyment of God the chief good. For this Lord Jesus is the only Advocate and Mediator between God and the soules of men. And as there is but one God so there is but one Mediator between God & men, the Man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim: 2. 5. He is the way, the truth and the life, there is no coming to the Father but by him, John 3 1. 6. To enjoy God it is true is our life, for in his favour is life, yea

yea his loving kindness is better then life it self, *Psalm. 30. 5. & 63. 3.* But it is as true, that this life can not now be had but through Christ, so that *he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, 1 John 5. 12.* If you desire Communion with God and shall sue unto him that you may enjoy it, (and you are most wretched & accursed if you do it not) yet in such case the Lord will speak to you in language like to that of the Lord of Egypt unto Jacobs sonns, *never see my face except your brother be with you,* never look to see the face of God to your comfort in this or in another world, except Jesus Christ be with you, and that you present your selves before God in his Satisfaction & Mediation. You may not think, oh let such thoughts be far from you, that you can have access to God or be accepted of him, for any thing that you have wrought or can work. You know but little of your selves if you do not know, that the best of your performances have need of pardon through the blood of Christ, and therefore they are not able to purchase any pardon or favour for you in the sight of God; no, no, it is Christ alone that must do this for you: you and your works must be washed in his precious blood, and so cleansed from the uncleans that is in you & them, or else both you & they will be rejected of God as most abominable in his sight. It is Christ alone that is the true High Priest that beares the iniquity of the holy things of Gods people, that through his Holiness they may be accepted before the Lord. *Exod. 28. 38.* which otherwise they could not be. It is he that is that true Golden Altar that Sanctifies all gifts, that are offered upen him. It is he that offers Incense with the prayers of all Saints, and perfumes them with his Merits and Intercession, that so they may ascend with acceptance before God out of his hand, *Rev. 8. 3. 4.* Wherefore of necessity you must disclaim all thought of any worth in your selves, or in the best of your doings, and look for all acceptance of your persons & performances through Jesus Christ and through him alone, as that blessed Martyr *John Lambert* cryed out at his death, *none but Christ, none but Christ.* When Christ was in the world he was allwayes carefull to honour the Father, & now the Father would have all men to honour him, even as they honour the Father; and we are plainly told, that *he that knoweth not the Son, he knoweth not the Father which sent him, 1 John 5. 23.* And of the honour that we should do unto the Son, this is the Sum, that we acknowledge all our interest in God, and so in all good to be only through him and accordingly through him alone to look for it, and to behave our selves as those that so do. If you shall through grace do thus, this will be greatly for the honour of Jesus Christ, wherein you have a notable & pregnant example of blessed Paul, as having gone before you in this way of giving honour to the Lord Jesus. For sometimes you have him say that he esteemed not to know

any thing since I set Christ and him Crucified, 1 Cor. 2.2. Sometimes you hear him say, God forbid that I should glory in anything save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 6.14. and sometimes he tells you that the things that were gain unto him, shall be counted loss for Christ, you shall lose the counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, for whom he suffered the loss of all things, and did count them but dung that he might win Christ, & me: for he found in him, not having his own Righteousness which was of the Law, but that which is by the faith of Christ, even the Righteousness which is of God through faith, that he might know him; and so forth as is more largely expressed in that 3. of Phil. verse 7, 8, 9, 10. A worthy pattern, and worthy to be followed; Yea & that which is followed by all them that are believers in truth, for unto all such this Lord Jesus is very precious, as 1 Pet. 2.7. yea he is exalted and exalted, and is very high; Isai. 52.13. they count him white & ruddy, the choicest amongst ten thousand, so that he is very excellent in their eyes from top to toe, his head, his eyes, his cheekes, his lips, his leggs & all have surpassing excellency in them in their esteem, and what ever he be to others, to them he is altogether lovely, Cant. 5.10, 11. &c. Wherefore if you do not dearly love and highly prize the Lord Jesus Christ, never count your selves to be true believers or true Christians, for in truth you are then far from it. Therefore be wise merchants, and sell all that you have to purchase this pearl: let the choicest of creature-comforts, the best of your own righteousness, and the sweetest of sinns, even the right eye and all, be low & little base & bitter, in your esteem, in comparison of Jesus Christ. Accept him gladly as your only Lord and Saviour. Take his yoke upon you, for it is easy and his burden light, and be not of them that say (in heart at least) we will not have this man to reign over us, Luke 19. 14. but count it (for so you well may) not only your duty but your happiness to be under his blessed and gracious government; you will find this to be a thousand times better, then to be left to your selves, to fulfill or follow your own wills. Consider how sweetly & lovingly he invites poor soules to come to him, professing that he will in no wise reject them that so do, but promising that he will entertain them & give them rest; John 6. 37. Mat. 11. 28, 29. Yea and how he layes the blame of mens eternal death & perdition upon themselves, because they will not come unto him that they may have life, John 5. 40. but he would have gathered them, as an hen do's chickens under her wings, and they will live Mat. 23. 37. Be afraid therefore least a promise, of eternal life and rest being left you in Christ Jesus, any of you should seem to come short of it, Hebr. 4. 1. That God should send his Christ into the world to save sinners, and sinners shall neglect to come to this Christ or to accept of him, as if they had no need of him, or could do well enough without him, this will doubtless be

of the damnation, the great & deep damnation of a world of men at the last day, *John 3. 19.* Kindness and grace despised must needs prouoke & procure the heavier wrath. Men had better to haue been Turks or other Infidels; and neuer have heard of the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; then living under the Gospel where they have heard of these things, yet to live and dy in their unbelief without union & communion with Christ, and in a continued neglect of him; yea it had been good for such men if they *had never been born*. Oh take heed and be afraid that it be not so with you or any of you; and again I say take heed and be afraid of such a thing.

But when you are once come to Christ, as I hope many of you are, then let all your life be a life of faith, in the frequent actings and exercises thereof upon this Christ, that from him *in whom all fulness dwells*, you may receiue continuall supplies of grace, according to all your occasions & needs: while you are in the wilderness of this world, you can not do better then to be alwayes *leaning upon your beloued*. In your selves you are feeble & weak, yea you have need of much and continuall supplies of grace; and Christ hath sufficient and abundant fulness for you. Make all your addresses unto God (and you are not right if those addresses be not frequent & many, but let them all be made) in this Christs Mediation and Name; so you shall find acceptance with the Father, as this Christ hath promised *John 16. 23.* but otherwise you may not look for any such matter.

And being redeemed to God by his blood, and reconciled by his death, you must now make account that *you are not your own*, but his; and therefore you must *no more live to your selves*, but to him that dyed for you and rose again, and hecunto the love of Christ should constrain you, *1 Cor. 6. 20. 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.* He hath dearly loved you, how can you be so unthankfull as not to love him again? And *if you love him*, you must *keep his Commandments*, for himself gives this as a badge and token of such as love him, *John 14. 21. 23.* Your love its true is little worth, and can not be profitable to him at all: But this must needs be acknowledged that he is well worthy of your love, were it never so good. And you shall be no loosers by loving him; for *he loves them that love him*, *Pro 8. 17.* and *the Father loveth them also*, *John 14. 21. & 16. 27.* and both Father & Son will come to him that truly loveth Christ; and will *manifest them*, dres to such a one, and *make their abode with him*, *John 14. 21, 23.* Yea they that love him & keep his Commandments, shall continue in his love, even as he keepeth his Fathers Commandments and continueth in his love, *John 15. 10.* His love moved him to lay down his life, for you; and your love to him should be such as to suffer any affliction, yea to lay

down your lives for his sake, if he shall call you unto it. If you love any creature how dear, or near so ever it may be, yea if you love your own lives better then him, he will never own you for his, nor account you his disciples, *Mat. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26.* and how much less if you love any sin so dearly that you can not leave it for Christs sake, but still retain it and live in it. Therefore see that you love him, and love him above all. Let your thoughts be much taken up in holy musings & meditations of him. Long for his presence in the comings in and gracious workings & fillings of his spirit. Let it be your greif, if at any time his face be hid from you. and count it a wearisome time till he shew himself again: with the loyal spouse of Christ it is so *Cant. 3. & 5.* and that heart is no better then the heart of an harlot, that hath not many thoughts of her husband when absent from her, but can bear his absence though it be never so long, without greif, with few and seldome thoughts of him, & small desires of his coming. He is now absent from you all in regard of his bodily presence; but he hath promised his spiritual presence, which is as good if not much better, *Mat. 28. 20. John 16. 7.* And besides his supporting, assisting & sanctifying presence by his Spirit, there are (especially to some soules and at some times) such spirituall consolations afforded in sense of their injoyment of Christ, they are said to be filled with comfort, and to be exceeding joyfull in all their tribulation, *2 Cor. 7. 4.* to be filled with peace and joy in believing, *Rom. 15. 13.* to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, & so be filled with all fulness of God, *Eph. 3. 19.* Yea that Christ brings them into the banqueting house and his banner over them is love, that he stays them as with flegons and comforts them with apples, they being sick of love, that his left hand is under their head, and his right hand doth embrace them, *Cant. 2. 4, 5, 6.* that in regard of the sweetnes of his love he is unto them as a bundle of myrrh and doth by all night between their breasts, *Cant. 1. 13.* and many such things which that book of the SONG doth express. Therefore if you love him, these consolations of his Spirit must not be small with you, *Job 15. 11.* but you must highly prize them, earnestly desire them, and pray for them, and be diligent in the use of the word and Ordinances wherein they are wont to be dispensed and count it as the Apostle counts it, *Rom. 14. 17.* a great part of the Kingdome of God to enjoy these joyes of the Holy Ghost.

But I must tell you the truth, it is but a small pittance of the comforts of Christ in comparison, that in this world you can enjoy. No, no, Jesus Christ is not here, he hath left this world and is gone unto the Father, and here we can see him no more. His choicest saints can not see him in fullnes, till the time come that they be removed hence, and then they shall see him, yea and be like unto him, for they shall see him as he is, *1 John 3. 2.* and then shall
all

all weakness and imperfection be done away, and perfection come in stead thereof, 1 Cor. 13. 10. Ye then shall be fulfilled the promise that he hath promised, that having prepared a place in heaven for his redeemed, he will come again & take them to himself, that where he is there they may be also. John 14. 2, 3. and then shall appear the full performance of this prayer of his, when he prayed unto the Father, that those whom he had given him might be with him where he is to behold his glory which is given unto him by the Father. John 17. 24. When this time shall come, then, my dearly beloved, you may be happy in the full fruition of Christ; but before that time it can not be. While you are at home in the body, you are absent from the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 6. Therefore take not up your rest on this side Jordan: Count not your selves to have attained what is to be attained, for you have yet no more but the first fruits, Rom. 8. 23 the full harvest is yet to come. Oh long for the harvest, long for your departure, and for the appearing of Christ. You know who said, it was his desire to depart and to be with Christ, which was far better, Phil. 1. 23. You know it is the description of all the godly, that they love the appearing of Jesus Christ, 2 Tim. 4. 8. Ye know it is their prayer, when he said he would surely come quickly, Amen say they, even so come Lord Jesus, Rev. 22. 20. My hearts desire is, my dearly beloved, that you may be like minded that you may sincerely love the Lord Jesus, truly desiring the fullest enjoyment of him and of the Father through him, and heartily hating what ever is contrary thereto; and that you may be preserved unto his heavenly Kingdom, having your hearts directed unto the love of God & to the patient waiting for Christ, and that you may be found of him in peace without spot and blameless, yea unblamable in holiness before God the Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

For those ends I have written to you as here you see, and I think I have done it out of a pure and not desire of the good of your souls. Weakeness I doubt not there are betwixt, as also in every thing that comes from me. If what is here presented to you had been better I could I will have rectified it you, yet such as it is I commend it to your serious consideration and Gods blessing, and so leave it with you. Yet this I must desire that you would not give these things the reading only, and so dismiss them with a bare approvall or disapprovall, but that what is according to God, you would seriously endeavour the practise thereof. As our Saviour said, If you know these things happy are you if you do them. John 13. 17. Even so say I to you. The directions are not many in number, but only seven, and so not hard to be remembered for the substance of them: and yet as I conceive, they are all of great importance, and not any of them that can be safely neglected.